SCRAWL

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diy/ hardcore | punk bulletin

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tHis TimE aRoUnD...

iNsiDe The fOrTreSS

the persecution of asylum seekers

a RevOlutiOn in wOrdS & piCtUreS

the life & work of John Heartfield

+ rEviEws

notes from the underground...

...from DDI/STALKER 12"

THE BLACK HAND 'Pulling Your Strings' 10"
Blasting their way out of Canada, this project features former members of IRE. However, rather than destroying the listener with slow, technical epics The Black Hand opt instead for an onslaught of fast, ferocious precision with a hint of metal. There's elements of the guitar sound and production which remind me of the "Scandinavian sound" and brings to mind the earliest (& best) ENTOMBED stuff, whilst mixing it with a rawer HC approach typical of recent years. As with their predecessors, lyrics are well articulated and political in intent. 4 tracks on this, complete with smart packaging and a dark, scary poster. Very good.
(Scorched Earth Policy...PO Box 3214, 76108 Karlsruhe, Germany)
www.scorchedearthpolicy.de

THE CUTTHROATS 9 CD
Any UNSANE fans out there? Well, for those pining after the aforementioned bands demise this could be the answer to your prayers. The bassist and guitarist of Unsane got this thing together and no prizes for guessing who it sounds like. This could have been sold as another Unsane album and nobody would have guessed otherwise. Dirty, scuzzy, fucked up noise/rock. Personal fave is the last track, "Sludge", which is a bit like being really drunk without having to clean the vomit off yourself afterwards. Nasty tunes for absolute bastards.
(Man's Ruin Records...www.mansruin.com)

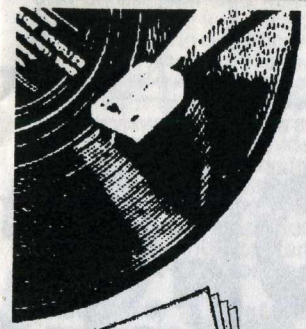
DDI / STALKER Split 12"
DDI are from Italy and play raw, fast hardcore with dual male/female vocals. They sing in their native language, though translations are provided on the insert. Lyrics reflect the archetypal HC/punk ideology (anger/frustration,sense of isolation) and are well written without pushing the genre. I like this-it's got lots of energy and passion but there's not much more I can say about it. Rough and ready HC punk which Italy has made its' stock and trade over the years. 10 tracks.
STALKER hail from Berlin and offer up 10 tracks of INFEST/CROSSED OUT styled power-violence. Completely lacking in subtlety, they employ mid-paced riffs tempered with blast beats to emphasise their discontent, throwing in a RORSCHACH cover version ('My Mind's In A Vice') for good measure. Their lyrics are written in the form of a neat comic strip. I like both sides, though Stalker get my personal vote!
"Tastefully " packaged in a lurid green gatefold which depicts some punker licking a womans hand...err...yeah -this is good.
(Maximum Voice Productions...Postfach 26, 04251 Leipzig, Germany)
(Thought Crime...Jens Walter, Petersburgerstr. 68, 10249 Berlin)

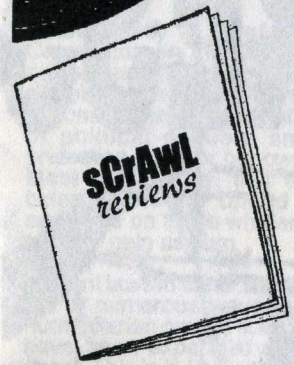
GOATSNAKE / BURNING WITCH cd
Slow and heavy is the order of the day with this release. GOATSNAKE offer up two slow tracks of pulsating drones which bring to mind some MELVINS stuff. Less of a rock / stoner sound than the other stuff I've heard by them. One of their tracks is a ST.VITUS cover apparently...
BURNING WITCH get my vote with their nastier, lurching compositions that sound not unlike the earlier, more fucked up BUZZOVEN stuff. Big sound...Steve Albini on production duties and all that. This is the kind of release that gets categorised as 'metal' yet bewilders the average metal head. Nothing nice or easy about any of this...just big fat chords and droning guitars. 4 tracks in just over half an hour means this doesn't exactly burst along with speed. You'll know if you need this or not.
(Hydra Head Records...PO Box 990248, Boston, MA 02199, USA)

HEARTATTACK *28 zine (A4, 80 pages)
The latest issue of this popular zine has the usual vast array of adverts, reviews, letters & articles. This issue sees interviews with CERBERUS SHOAL, GOOD CLEAN FUN and activist DAVE HILL. Particularly interesting was a column examining the concept of "selling out" and the validity of the mainstream vs. the underground, plus Kent McClards' piece on the use of credit cards and its implications in "punk rock". Whereas I may not always agree with everything said in this zine, it continues to provide engaging debate and is a good resource mag. I always find something of interest in this one. This costs $3 by airmail (it's basically free but postage bumps up the price), but it's usually available from many UK distros for price of postage.
(Ebullition, PO Box 680, Goleta, CA 93116, USA)
heartattack@ebullition.com

KNUT 'Ordeal' 7"
This Swiss killing machine follow up their 'Basterdiser' 12" with two tracks of unharnessed rage. Whereas their earlier stuff sounded a bit like a dirtier Helmet, this seven inch is more in the vein of KISS IT GOODBYE, or perhaps JESUIT. Really noisy, intricate HC with a heavily abrasive, discordant sound. Full on vocals, angst filled lyrics...absolutely brutal. Comes on some of the thickest white vinyl I have ever seen. Possibly the musical equivalent of being kicked to death.
(Snuff Records...PO Box 5117, CH-1211 Geneve 11, Switzerland)

OXES 12"
I 'm typing this only a couple of days after witnessing this band play at the Warzone Centre. After careful contemplation, I have come to the conclusion that they are one of the finest live bands I have EVER seen. Absolutely crazed 3 piece-2 guitars(no bass) and drums. They played with radio mics stuck into their guitars and basically ran about the whole venue and leapt off amps for the good part of an hour whilst making a seriously unholy racket. Imagine if members of DON CABALLERO and SLINT got together and played instrumental BOTCH cover versions. Backwards. Fucking bizarre yet seriously rockin'. This 12" is really good and I definitely would urge you to check it out, though I think OXES are best appreciated live. Destined to become legends.
(Monitor...PO Box 2361, Baltimore, Md., 21203, USA)
www.monitorrecords.com

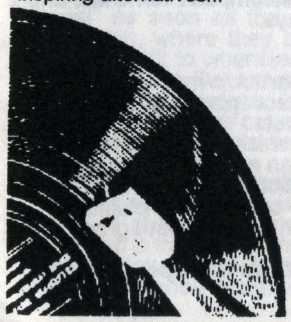




aBoUt rEvIewS...
Scrawl! welcomes anything sent for review, though the emphasis is on DIY/hardcore/punk type projects. I will endeavour to review anything on its' own merits but be warned-sexist / racist crap and contrived 'nu-metal' acts go straight to the trash.

A lot of the featured items are nigh on impossible to get in stores, and usually cost less. I recommend trying one of the many independent record/zine distros that exist in the UK and elsewhere-checking the internet is a good way to find who nearest to you has what you want. If all else fails, contact bands / people direct.

All opinions expressed are just that...opinions! Check out some of this stuff or seek out inspiring alternatives...



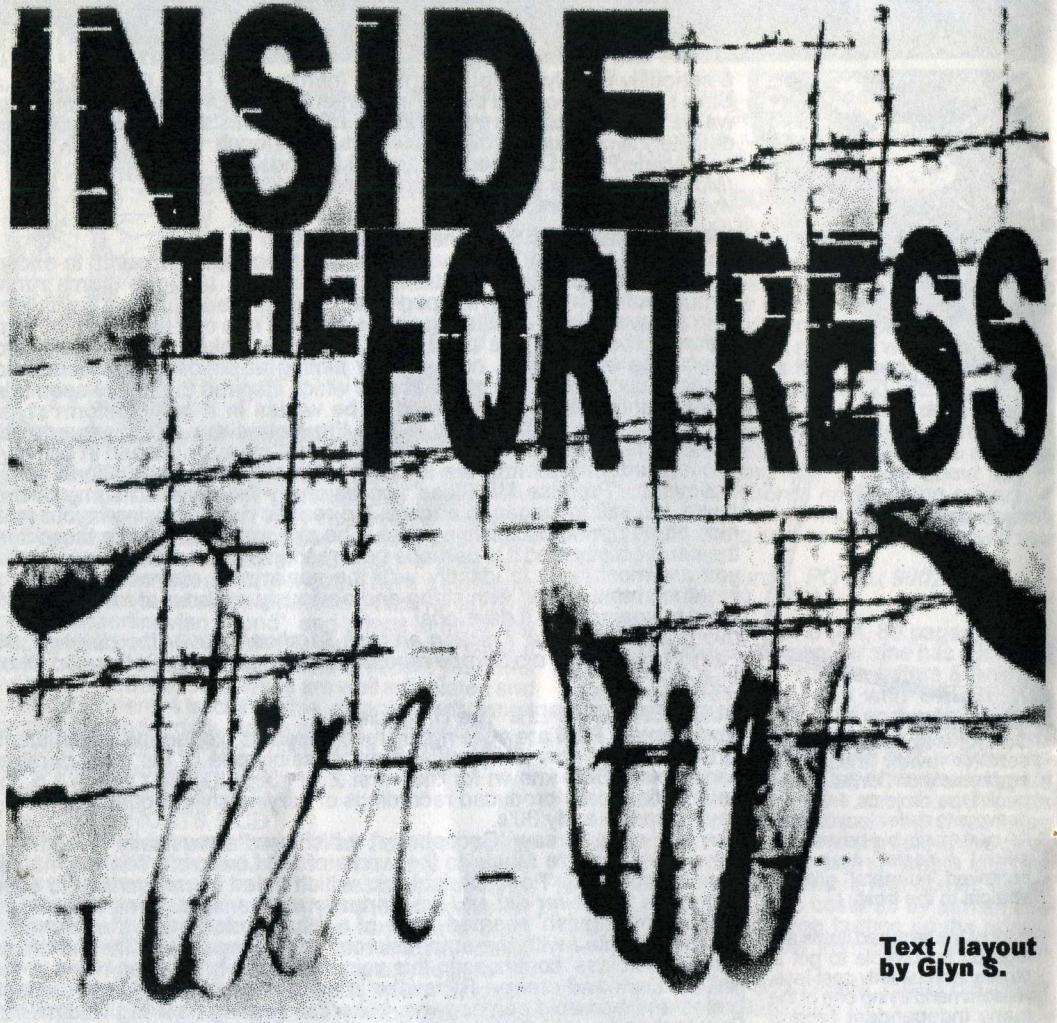
PROMISE ME SKIES *2 zine (A5, 28 pages)
This is one of those "personal" zines which basically amounts to excerpts from the authors diary, artistically executed with a vague theme running throughout each issue. In this particular case the preoccupation is with friendship & travel, whilst meditating on the use and role of a bicycle in the exploration of these. For the most part, the writing takes the form of various anecdotes and stories, occasionally hinting at philosophical conclusions reached upon reflection of the events which inspired them. I've seen lots of zines in this vein, and they tend to be written in a fairly uniform style. A common failing of this genre is that the stories are often imbued with a personal relevance which the writer does not always succeed in conveying to the reader, rendering the implied political/social observations virtually irrelevant. 'Promise Me Skies' occasionally falls prey to some of these faults, but still manages to engage the reader via a pleasing layout (some nice photos), and accessible prose. The strength of zines like these lies in their subjectivity, and it is perhaps best read in a contemplative mood when you are most likely to identify with the sentiments expressed. Nicely put together, hand bound with string and obviously a labour of love...I look forward to seeing how it develops!
(No price details, but I reckon an Irish £1 should cover the damage...Airy Fairy Publications, c/o Scrape records, 35 Mapas Road, Dalkey, Co.Dublin, Ireland)

RUDIMENTARY PENI 'The Underclass' 7"
Rudimentary Peni are quite rightly recognised as pioneering and influential in the realm of anarcho punk and are possibly one of the most deranged bands ever. Best known for their first 2 Eps and 'Death Church' Lp, they have sporadically produced recordings of varying style & quality since their heyday in the early 80's.
The late eighties saw 'Cacophony', which was a musically inventive yet immensely bizarre tribute to the works of HP Lovecraft. The mid-nineties saw the appalling 'Pope Christriatric' which paled in comparison to everything else they ever did and was virtually unlistenable. Their last release, 'Echoes of Anguish' seemed more of a return to form, but the sound was still firmly rooted with the emphasis on simple, repetitive riffs and chants. 'The Underclass' continues in this vein, but harks back even more to their first 7". Dark and creepy, RP evoke images of mental asylums, damaged brains and bad acid comedowns. I like this (writing as a big Rudimentary Peni fan) and would recommend it to other converts...those new to the band might be better starting with 'Death Church' though.
(Outer Himalayan Records, PO Box 59, London N22 1AR, UK)

SEVERED HEAD OF STATE 7"
This bands main claim to fame is that it involves ex-members of DETESTATION and HIS HERO IS GONE. This 7" is a follow up to their one sided 12" that came out last year, which I found slightly disappointing given the pedigree of the former bands, suffering mainly from a weak recording. This release is a definite improvement. The songs are faster, the production noisier & in general is a lot more powerful. Cynical lyrics, stark B & W images make this a competent, if typical HC release...though I would have to say that the other HHIG spin-off band DEATHTHREAT did the same kind of thing better.
(Ebullition...see 'Heartattack' review for address)

SHITLIST 'A Cold Slap of Reality' 7"
Angry as fuck crusty HC from Seattle which pisses all over the ghost of 'grunge' . Six incensed blasts from these anarcho malcontents which brings to mind Swedish hardcore like SKITSYSTEM, or bands influenced by the likes of them such as STATE OF FEAR. Razor sharp guitars, raging vocals and no-nonsense lyrics combined in a sonic assault of epic proportions that demands to be played loud. Not nice or clever, but to this listener, essential. The kind of thing you can really piss your neighbours off with-not that I could condone such behaviour of course...
(Fired Up! Records, PO Box 8985, Minneapolis, MN 55408, USA)

INSIDE THE FORTRESS



Text / layout by Glyn S.

Throughout the nineties, culminating in the pre-milleninial delirium that characterised most of the media output for the latter part, we were bombarded with the terminology of the 'global village'. This concept was basically the pop-political equivalent to the dreamy new-agers *Age of Aquarius*... a utopian world unhindered by concerns of race or religion. A super-nation in which diversity had become a strength rather than a cause for quarrel. A 21st century planet. An era of hope and enlightenment ,stepping into a new millennium whilst consigning the dark excesses of our predecessors to history. To enter an age of compassion, a celebration of difference and our common trait of being human.
Images flash on the screen. People atop the Berlin Wall with hammers. Aid workers in Africa. Borders crumbling. Hunger abating.
Switch the channel. War in the former Yugoslavia. Elsewhere, a child is maimed by neo-nazis.
Our mock concern. Our crocodile tears.

This "compassion" is nothing more than a cultural fashion accessory. The nineties promoted 'ethical' concerns as part of an overall lifestyle, which was marketed and sold to us.
All of a sudden we found ourselves surrounded by 'fair trade' stores, with imported gifts at highly inflated prices. We *bought* our multi-culturalism, applauding ourselves in our appreciation of foreign societies whilst retaining an arrogance that is solely the providence of the privileged.
We immersed ourselves in what we saw as exotic via t.v. screens,computer terminals and 2 week package holidays.
We lied to ourselves.

The lie is becoming harder to maintain. The once outstretched hand of acceptance now counts the change in our pockets. We talk of a "united Europe" whilst sermonising about our "cultural identity" as if it were an endangered species under threat of extinction. The borders we sought to dismantle with self-congratulary platitudes are being rebuilt with fear, paranoia and greed.

Welcome to Fortress Europe.

The main test of our "compassion" has proved to be the issue of refugees seeking asylum. Civil unrest, war and ethnic cleansing in Eastern Europe over the last decade has forced thousands to seek refuge in neighbouring countries. Inevitably, many have journeyed to the UK and Ireland only to be met with an intolerance that echoes the persecution from which these people have fled. Whilst we may view ourselves as a "civilised" nation -democratically governed and ideologically in opposition to the tyranny inflicted on these refugees -we are at the same time responsible for a complacency that allows it to continue. Worse still, the policies implemented by our chosen representatives & supported by the popular press act as a virtual endorsement of this persecution.

What exactly is a "refugee"? The 1951 Geneva Convention on the Status of Refugees defines a refugee as "someone who has a well founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion, and who cannot expect protection in his or her own country".
Most importantly, this act also obliges states belonging to the United Nations not to impose sanctions on those who enter a state illegally in an effort to gain asylum.

Current laws in the U.K. and Ireland contravene this act in numerous ways, and despite protest from humanitarian groups such as Amnesty International, have been expanded on over the last couple of years. This is in line with legislation which has been introduced at local levels all over the European Union. This policy, dubbed "Fortress Europe" by its' detractors, defies the basic standards for refugees established by the Geneva Convention. It places basic human rights at the very bottom of a long list headed by financial and economic interests. We have locked the door on those crying on our doorstep, choosing instead to count our coffers.
Legislation in the UK and Ireland has created a bureaucratic minefield for those seeking asylum. Despite the 1951 Status of Refugees act stating that countries cannot impose sanctions on those seeking asylum, this is precisely what is happening. Both the British and Irish governments have implemented strict measures for the detainment and deportation of "illegal" immigrants. Their illegal status is earned by attempting to enter the country without a valid passport or visa. An Amnesty International report noted that "people fleeing persecution from their own Government may be forced to rely on false papers to escape the country, but now face possible imprisonment if they use these means to arrive".
This is essentially a 'Catch 22' situation. Those seeking to escape hostile environments often need to rely on false documentation, yet are branded as "illegal" as soon as they arrive at their chosen destination, where they are either imprisoned or deported back to wherever they have fled. Despite the Universal Declaration of Human Rights statement that everyone has the right to seek and enjoy freedom from persecution, the policies we implement only criminalise those who pursue this right.
As a result of this criminalisation,over 2000 people have died since 1993 in attempts to enter the E.U. Some of these have drowned in the sea, or suffocated in the back of freight lorries. Others have taken their own lives whilst in detention, rather than face death when returning to their homelands. Even those with proper documentation have no guarantee of finding refuge within the fortress walls. Since coming to power, the U.K. Labour government has deported & refused entry to over 113,00 asylum seekers.
Ireland also has passed increasingly stringent legislation which seems concerned only with how *quickly* asylum seekers can be deported. The cost in human life and the suffering of innocent people is gargantuan, yet our governments defend these policies with talk of "bogus" asylum seekers and "illegal" immigrants when it is only the system that they have created which deems them such. Indeed, the term "bogus" has been used in conjunction with the term "asylum seeker" so frequently within the media circus that it basically implies most, if not *all* of those seeking asylum do so without justification.

Once again George Orwells concept of "Newspeak" rears its ugly head. Are we such fools that we can be blinded by the language of the state, the word-play of spin-doctors? Is our "compassion" so easily swayed by mere semantics...or is it the racism we secretly nurture that is the root of our complacency?

There are no excuses. We have eagerly devoured the propaganda disseminated by the architects of Fortress Europe, carefully weaned onto a vocabulary of separatism and fear by broadsheets and soundbites. For the most part, media coverage of the issue has been sensationalist in nature and is responsible for making the term "immigrant" interchangeable with "criminal". This is a trend that can be seen reflected in the press throughout Europe.

The majority of stories found in the media tend to be derived from police reports, and thus highlight only the issue of criminal activity amongst immigrants and asylum seekers. Those who abide by the law of the land are not newsworthy, and thus we are presented with a skewed vision of a nation facing an influx of criminals. The reports from which this "news" is derived are often questionable in nature. In Romania, the police compile special crime statistics focusing solely on "Gypsy" crime yet no other racial group is singled out for this treatment. Police in Oslo, Norway issued selective and misleading crime figures which purported to show a trend amongst immigrants towards involvement with violent crime. These statistics came under attack from criminologists but their rational objections were swept aside in the resulting press and public hysteria on the issue, resulting in the application of new deportation laws.
In Milan, Italy there was panic over the soaring crime rate, with immigrants once again being seen as the main culprits. In reality, statistics showed that Milan's crime rate was actually in *decline.*
Yet the damage is done, and the masses cry for increasingly tough action...never mind the facts. Other European countries such as the Netherlands, Germany & Greece also release crime statistics focusing on particular "ethnic" groups.
The implied equation of "immigrant=criminal" is universal throughout the European media.
In pressing the sensitive areas of the public consciousness in a call for readers ,it also fuels the fire of the far Right, who waste no time in capitalising on the false issue and portraying themselves

as a legitimate force reacting to an issue of intense public concern. We invite the demons we would otherwise decry.

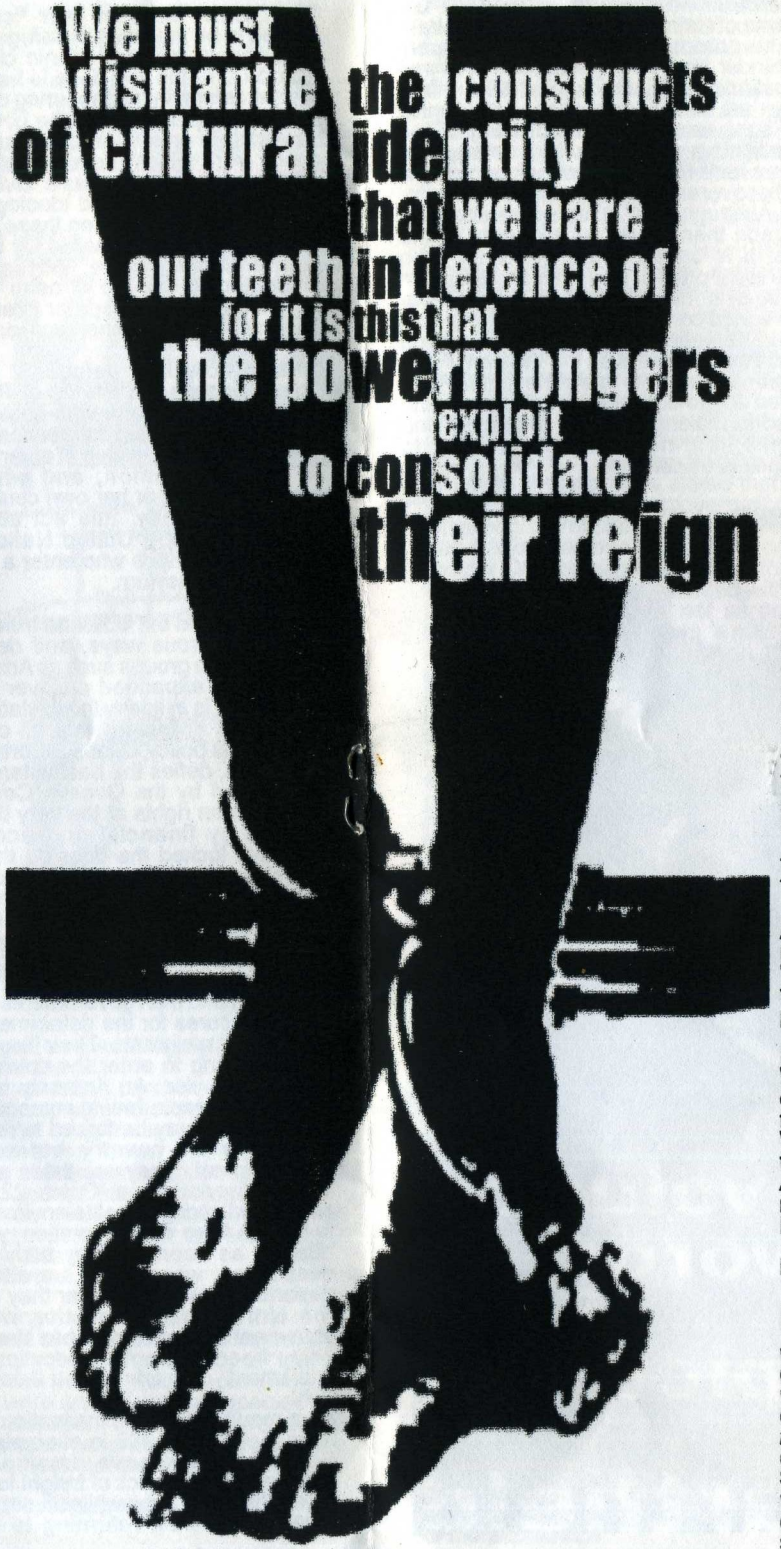
In the UK and Ireland, the official party line has been that of "clamping down" on "bogus" asylum seekers. Rather than assuming the legally accepted tenet of "innocent until proven guilty", all asylum seekers are made to suffer under laws and media coverage which portrays them as either fraudulent or criminal. The fact is that many of these refugees have left their whole lives and families behind to spend months in detention awaiting possible deportation, or at best, substandard accommodation with a pittance from the government on which to survive. Yet once again this is not the story portrayed by the mass media. The Irish Council of Civil Liberties lambasted the editor of the Wexford People who, in an editorial, accused refugees of buying designer clothes, eating and living in posh hotels-all at the expense of the Irish tax payer.
The truth is conspicuous by its' absence.

Negative and fraudulent reporting of the asylum issue in the media does not only influence public opinion, but can also affect government policy. During 1998, Roma and Kosovan refugees fleeing racist persecution attracted hostile comment from the Dover Express, and then later by the Daily Mail. The emphasis was once again on the supposed issue of "bogus" asylum seekers. Riding the wave of public hysteria (which it had helped create), the tabloids made daily demands of the government to "stop the madness" and send "asylum spongers packing". The government panicked, hoping to silence the avalanche of criticism the tabloids had initiated. Home Secretary Jack Straw announced in his News of the World column the introduction of reforms to address the issue of "bogus" asylum seekers. Soon after, the Daily Mail published an "investigation into Britain's immigration crisis" entitled 'The good life on asylum alley". Aside from perpetuating the myth of prosperous and contented asylum seekers it also printed the address of a family seeking asylum in Dover-an act which led to the family's home being attacked. It is arguable how much the press can be held accountable for, but is a fact that the British government had been *increasing* the proportion of immigrants being granted with refugee status, mainly as a damage limitation exercise against criticism from human rights groups. This policy ended with the tabloid hysteria initiated by the Dover Express and Daily Mail.

Although the media can exploit and capitalise upon certain political situations, the reverse is also true. Governments are quick to turn hysteria into a selling point for their own policies, or use it as a tool for diverting attention from their own failings.

Take the example of John O'Donoghue. At the height of the Kosovo Crisis, the Irish government agreed to admit 1000 refugees into Ireland. O'Donoghue, the Minister for Justice paraded himself in front of the worlds media by posing with the first group of refugees to arrive, thus scoring important "humanitarian points". Perhaps this was an effort to redress any negative comment he had entertained in refusing asylum to nearly 200 kosovar refugees over the 2 years previous. A brief smile and moment of ingratiation to distract from his previous promise that up to 90% of asylum seekers coming to Ireland could expect to be deported.
Nevertheless, the good minister saw fit to rush the "Immigration Bill 1999" through Irish parliament, its sweeping legislation effectively ending the chances of thousands seeking asylum.
The manipulation of the media does not stop there. On November 20th, 1999 the Irish government brought the "Refugee Act" into force. One of the many restrictions applied by this act (including compulsory fingerprinting) is one of censorship. Under this legislation, asylum seekers must get written permission from the government to have themselves identified by the media. The penalty for defying this act of silencing is a £1500 fine or 12 months in prison.
Considering the fact that most refugees arrive with nothing and receive only £15 a week in welfare payments, this proves to be an effective way of muting any governmental criticism, whilst allowing the perpetuation of racist stereotypes.

There is no scapegoat more suitable than one who cannot be heard. The censorship of those seeking refuge in has proved profitable to



the movers & shakers within this Fortress. Whenever important subjects such as employment or housing are brought into debate, you can be guaranteed that conservative factions within the political & media circuses will mention immigrants in connection with the topic.
Those on the right would rather distract from the issue than seek to rectify the cause. The reality of Irelands housing "crisis" is due to the hoarding of land by large companies & a handful of speculators. The £1.9 billion needed to remedy the situation could have been paid last year with the 1999 budget surplus. Fears over employment are equally unfounded. In a time of unprecedented economic growth, job vacancies are plentiful.
Speaking at a job fair in 1999, Mary Harney spoke of some 200,000 extra workers required under the latest National Development Plan.

The emergence of racist tendencies in response to a humanitarian issue is worrying, though perhaps not surprising. What I personally find of most concern is the *ease* in which the idea of immigrants destabilising our society takes hold, even amongst those who perceive themselves as liberal in outlook. The Irish situation is of particular interest in this light. Because of its comparative isolation, contact with foreign cultures and prolonged exposure to them has been minimal compared to many other parts of the world. Is our "identity" so unstable that we can only maintain it by means of geographical distance? If so, then how we can reconcile the strengthening of our borders with the vast numbers of Irish who have fled these shores in sparser times? The 1996 Census showed that 11% of the Irish population (400,000 people) had spent more than 1 year abroad before returning to their homeland. During the 1990's, the Irish government pleaded with the Clinton administration to grant amnesty to young Irish illegal immigrants within the U.S, who number an estimated 70,000 a year.
It seems that our prosperity is equalled only by our greed...that now we have scaled the battlements, it's good to have somebody around to piss down on...

The irony is bitter yet still it is swallowed...
Those in power argue for their right to dismantle trade borders and sing the globalisation tune. At the same time they call for the halt of human traffic who flee from the chaos they allow to continue.

Through hysteria they create fear.
Through fear they apply restriction.

And we embrace these measures in all their draconian splendour, revelling in the fact that we are "protecting our heritage", "preserving our identity" whilst at the same time assimilating foreign culture, art and food in a pseudo-bohemian display of our perceived membership of a "global community".

It's time to stop lying to ourselves.
We must re-appraise our cherished values. We must dismantle the constructs of cultural identity that we bare our teeth in defence of, for it is this that the powermongers exploit to consolidate their reign.
When the veil of media and state deception is removed, the architects of the Fortress are revealed. They are the true criminals.
And they cannot be identified by the colour of their skin or their religion ,but by their prosperity.
Images flash on the screen. Borders crumbling? Hunger abating?

I don't think so.

For more information:

www.carf.demon.co.uk
(Anti-racism campaigners...info on asylum laws / campaigns etc.)
www.oneworld.org/wacc/media/corcoran.htm
(Further reading / article..."The Refugee challenge for Ireland')
flag.blackened.net/revolt/wsm_race.html
(Anarchist / anti-racist orientated site connected to Workers Solidarity Movement...lots of links / articles etc.)
www.penlex.org.uk/pages/prtasyl.html
(Prison ReformTrust report on detention practices for asylum seekers & Immigration Act prisoners in the UK)

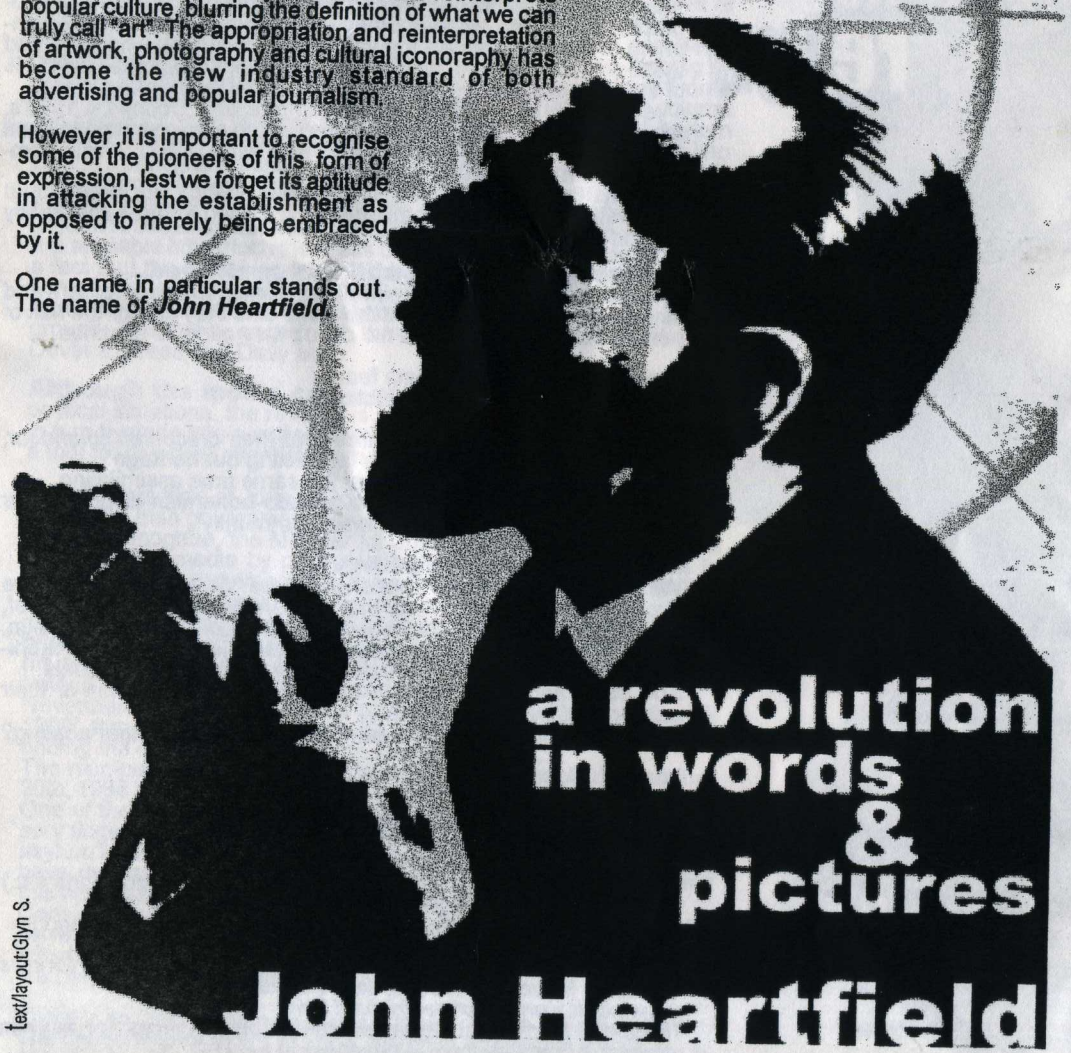
It could be said that one of the defining traits ,or at least more recognisable qualities of what we call "the counterculture" lies in its mode of artistic representation. The "cut & paste" aesthetic adopted by the early punk movement and since elaborated on those following in its footsteps has spawned many iconic & unforgettable images. Think of the Sex Pistols "God Save The Queen" logo, or any of the many Dead Kennedys t-shirts hanging in shop windows. Think of Crass and the panoramic parodies of politicians that accompanied their records. It is a mode of expression we now take for granted, and one which has been adopted and assimilated by the "mainstream". With the advent of powerful home computers and image manipulation software, we are perhaps more conscious of the tools of design than ever. "Ironic" use of contemporary images in advertising and the press has become the norm, and most discussions on modern design theory quote the concept of "post-modernism" as an integral ingredient.

By now we are used to the bombardment of images via newspaper, television and computer screen. Mass media constantly devours and reinterprets popular culture, blurring the definition of what we can truly call "art". The appropriation and reinterpretation of artwork, photography and cultural iconoraphy has become the new industry standard of both advertising and popular journalism.

However ,it is important to recognise some of the pioneers of this form of expression, lest we forget its aptitude in attacking the establishment as opposed to merely being embraced by it.

One name in particular stands out. The name of ***John Heartfield.***

John Heartfield was born in Berlin, 1891 under the name of Helmut Herzfeld. He was abandoned by his parents at an early age and spent his youth under the eye of distant relatives and various institutions. By the age of 19, he had become an art student and studied in Munich where he soon came into the company of the various radicals and artists who congregated there. It was here that Heartfield, along with his friends, discovered the technique of "photo-montage". Although other artists of the time were later to credit themselves as pioneers of the technique, it is undoubtedly Heartfield who proved the most prolific, inventive and skilled in the practice of it. In keeping with the anti-war ethos that would come to characterise the bulk of his work, he seemingly drew his inspiration from World War I. Soldiers on the Western Front were apparently unable to relate the horrors they experienced due to censorship restrictions, and so resorted to making collages of artwork and photographs from newspapers in order to describe their predicament.



text/layout:Glyn S.

Heartfield developed an interest in Communism ,which was essentially a reaction to the increasingly nationalistic and fascistic elements coming to the fore during his youth. In 1914/15 he was drafted into the infantry, only to repeatedly desert, returning to Berlin to pursue anti-war activities. It was in 1916 that he adopted the name of John Heartfield in protest to the anti-British hate campaign of the time, in which it became the norm for those of patriotic intent to greet one another with the saying "God punish England".

Over the next few years, Heartfield associated himself with various artists and groups who he felt shared his increasingly left-wing and anti-authoritarian outlook . This led to his involvement and association with *Dada*. Dada was a movement which had begun in Zurich, Switzerland and sought to destroy what it saw as conventional and decadent definitions of art. Although the Berlin group (of which he was a founder) shared in these aims, it was more politicised than the original Swiss, or later Paris based groups. Whereas these groups stated that Dada *"signifies nothing"*, the Berlin movement called for *"the international revolutionary union of all creative and intellectual men and women on the basis of radical Communism"*. Whereas the Swiss and French Dadaists experimented with photo-montage, their efforts were not as politicised and believed in Dada instead as *"a matter of the spirit and as such could not accept no master, neither the aristocrat nor the proletarian"*.
It was Heartfields interest in the revolutionary ideas of the proletariat that essentially led to him to pursue his own path. The Dadaists didn't share Heartfields confidence in a set political agenda such as Communism ,and whilst being preoccupied with confronting the ruling elite, they also refrained from making direct reference to it in their work . As such, a lot of their output failed to make an impact upon the public at large, agitating and confusing only those within the artistic establishment.
Heartfield, on the other hand, concentrated on exploring his own theories of typography and layout in order as to have maximum effect on the observer as possible. It was thus, in his own words that he *"consciously placed photography in the service of political agitation"*.

He was one of the first to realise that the weakness of the enemy lies in the very propaganda it uses to support itself.
Unlike many of his contemporaries, he was unconcerned with the notion of his identity as an "artist", revelling in the anomynity of his chosen medium which was accessible to all, owing more to to the conventions of advertising and newspapers that the elitist art movements to which he felt opposed.
For Heartfield, true artistic value lay not in some elusive agenda pursued by an intellectual elite but in clarifying the horror & absurdity of those in power by combining painstakingly manipulated photos with carefully chosen text. Graphic artist Heiri Strub described Heartfields work as *"the clear solution of a concept, with the purposeful accomplishment of the substance and form of an idea. The graphic means, the distribution of space, the proportions, the choice of lettering, the tonal quality or the color of the photograph were subordianted to this. Every detail was a part of the expression"*.

In response to inflation, depression & the growth of fascism in Weima Germany, Heartfields art began to display a more aggressive politica nature. Below (1) we can see his uncompromising stance clearly in *Th Face of Fascism (1928)* in which a skull is super-imposed on the face of Mussolini, surrounded by those Heartfield saw as his corrupt backers and dead victims.

1

(2) *Should men fall again that shares may rise?! (1932)*
Although Hitler proclaimed peaceful intentions, he was backed by bi business and high finance...a fact not lost on Heartfield who saw exactl who would profit in the event of war.

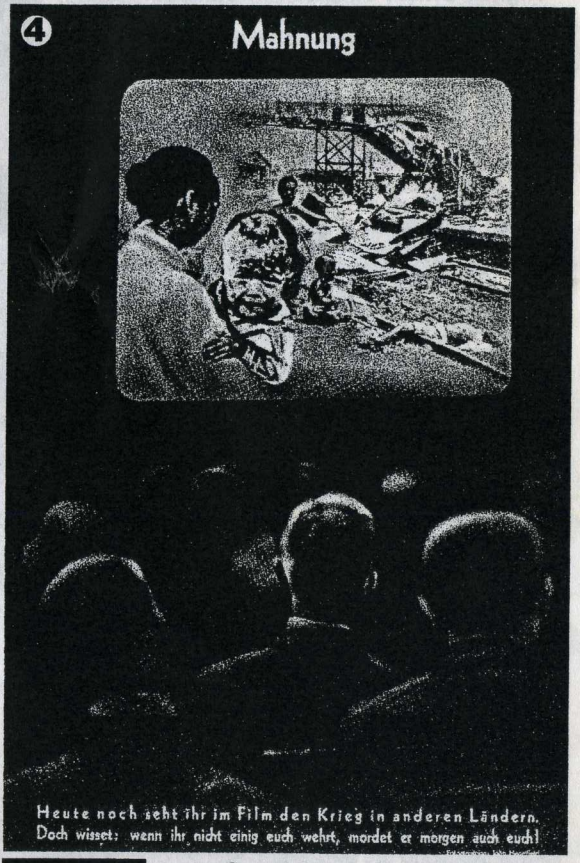
2

Unsurprisingly, the work he is most renowned for is that dealing with Nazism and the formative years of the Third Reich. Whilst initially working from within Germany, the controversial and critical nature of his work brought him to the attention of the Nazis in 1933. Faced with inevitable arrest he fled to Prague, Czechoslovakia, where he produced many of his most famous works until being forced to flee once again in 1938 with the Nazi invasion. This time he fled to London, where he stayed for 12 years during which he exhibitied his work, spoke at political rallies and was involved in organising anti-Nazi groups.
In 1950, he returned to Germany, continuing to work and exhibit until his death in 1968.
The life of John Heartfield was an eventful one, and impossible to chronicle in detail within the confines of this brief overview. However, the power of his work cannot be denied, and it speaks volumes about the man himself that the most hard-hitting and uncompromising examples of this are those which were created in the politically intolerant environment surrounding the growth of the Nazi party.

His influence is considerable, evidenced by the prominence of photomontage style artwork in both cultural & countercultural quarters today, but it is the message he conveyed that remains most vital. **eNd.**

(3)As in the Middle Ages...so in the Third Reich (1934)
One of Heartfields main methods of attack was to use the bold and manipulative imagery of his enemies and place it in a new context so as to discredit them. The upper portion of the image is of a supplicant broken upon a wheel, taken from a middle-ages bas-relief. The bottom portion is a grim reflection of this, highlighting the growing concern over the Nazis movement in ideology towards the "final solution to the Jewish question".

(4)Warning...Today you see a film of war in other countries. But remember, if you don't unite to resist it now, tomorrow it will kill you too! (1937)
A great deal of Heartfields work still carries with it the relevance and sense of urgency that drove him to its creation in the first place. It was not specifically the Nazis that he felt threatened by, but the concept of war itself. Writing on this piece for an exhibition in 1968 he wrote..."*since we are living in the nuclear age, a third world war would mean a catastrophe for all mankind, a catastrophe the full extent of which cannot possibly be imagined. Before the outbreak of World War II, on 13th October 1937, I made a photomontage entitled Warning. A movie audience was shown looking at scenes of horror caused by a Japanese air raid on Manchuria in the Far East...(later) the war of extermination against the Vietnamese people, fighting heroically for their existence made me change the first line to read: '...you see a film of war in far-off Vietnam... Now there is war in the Middle East! Shortly before that, a monarchist-fascist putsch smothered every democratic political movement in Greece. The flames are licking at your doorstep!*"


4
Mahnung
Heute noch seht ihr im Film den Krieg in anderen Ländern.
Doch wisset: wenn ihr nicht einig euch wehrt, mordet er morgen auch euch!

further information...

Most of the images and information in this article was taken from 'Photomontages of the Nazi period' (Carl Verlag, Universe Books 1977), now sadly out of print.
The following websites provide info & links to related topics and give details of available books + artwork...
www.photography.about.com/arts/photography/cs/photomontage/ (Heartfield articles, further reading)
www.towson.edu/heartfield/ (Chronology + links)
www.hku.hk/complit/staff/lee-dada.html. (Dada, etc.)

(5)This is the salvation that they bring! (1938)
Perhaps one of his most striking images, this montage depicts five skeletal fingers created by the flight of bomber planes soaring over the ruins of a city littered with corpses.
Originally this piece was created in reference to the use of German airplanes in the Spanish Civil War, but when Allied bombing of Germany began during World War II, Heartfield reissued it under the title of *"The Benefit Accomplished by Air Raids from the Point of View of Racial Selection and Social Hygiene."* The added text at the side of the photograph was an excerpt from the scientific manifesto of the Nazi party, the *Berlin Journal for Biology and Race Research: "The densely populated sections of cities suffer most acutely in air raids. Since these areas are inhabited for the most part by the ragged proletariat, society will thus be rid of these elements. One-ton bombs not only cause death but also very frequently cause madness. People with weak nerves cannot stand such shocks. That makes it possible for us to find out who the neurotics are. Then the only thing that remains is to sterilize such people. Thereby the purity of the race is guaranteed."*
Once again, the artist uses the weapons of the enemy as a method of defense. At a time when the Nazis would have been trying to capitalise upon these attacks by decrying the bombings and portraying the Allies as murderers of women & children, Heartfield exposes the double standards and hypocrisy of the Reich simply by quoting their own texts.

(6)For the establishment of the State Church the Cross was still not heavy enough. (1933)
A man in Nazi uniform screws additional pieces of wood to the crucifix carried by Christ. In this Heartfield was commenting on state reforms, which revised religous freedoms and brought the Church further into alignment with Hitlers ideologies, making reference to both institutions as instruments of mass control.

(7)Never again! (1960)
This is a later version of *The moral of Geneva (1932)* , in which Heartfield was addressing the issue of a workers protest against fascism in which 15 were killed and 60 wounded. It is undoubtedly his most famous work and was popularised in the punk scene by *Discharge* during the 1980's. His own words, spoken a year before his death, best explain the image: *"So that the dove may never again be impaled on a bayonet, all peace loving men, whatever their political opinions, must close the ranks in the fight to maintain peace."*

rEvIeWs...

SPACEBOY 'The Force That Holds Together A Heart Torn To Pieces' 10"
Spaceboy are odd. I was very impressed with their previous 12"/cd which was a crushing mix of HC,metal and space-rock/ ambient stylings. The bellowed vocal work by ex-BLAST front man Clifford topped off the whole mix splendidly, making it sound a bit like the demented offspring of MAN IS THE BASTARD and OZRIC TENTACLES.
'The Force That Holds...' continues in a similar vein, but is arguably more experimental in nature, and the Billy Anderson (Unsane, Brutal Truth, Neurosis etc.) production seems to give it a haunting, ethereal feel. An engaging yet unsettling experience. Other comparisons that spring to mind would be DÄMAD or even old SST band BLIND IDIOT GOD. The overall bizarreness of the record could possibly be explained in part by song titles such as 'Strange New Powers' or 'Pot Hibernation' which give a pretty clear indication how these guys spend their spare time. Just to confuse you further, the cover depicts fairies flying over a forest. Totally 'out there' but most certainly rocking!
(Howling Bull America, PO BOX 40129 San Francisco, CA 94140-0129)
www.howlingbull.com

THE STEAM PIG 'Deep Fried Obedience' CD
The Steam Pig have been knocking out tunes for a few years now in a what you could call the "street-punk" genre. Not my thing as a rule, but I appreciate it when it succeeds in being catchy & anthemic, or has something new to offer.
'Deep Fried Obedience' is a 14 track collection of punk rock singalong numbers that you could quite happily file alongside fellow Irish acts such as RUNNIN' RIOT or SKINT, whilst remaining distinctive in its' own right. Indeed, the pace and style of some of the songs makes me think this is what NOFX might have sounded like if they had traded in their surfboards, shaved their heads and gone drinking in Dublin for the better part of their youth. The lyrics have an interesting turn of phrase, for the most part written by bassist Boz (of NOSEBLEED zine) and relate various stories & points of view which are distinctively "oirish". If you like no nonsense, no frills punk rock you can sing-a-long to, this might just be what you need...
(Rejected Records...PO BOX 6591, Dun Laoghaire, Co.Dublin, Ireland)
www.thumped.com/rejected

WHAT BECOMES OF THE BROKEN HEARTED? video
This film is the sequel to the highly acclaimed "Once Were Warriors", the bleak and hard hitting tale of an indigenous New Zealand family. The first instalment concentrated mainly on the issue of domestic violence, perpetuated by the volatile father figure of 'Jake the Muss', a man blind to the needs of his family, choosing instead to live a life of drinking & fighting at the local bar. Whereas it is arguably the character of daughter, Grace, who plays the central role in the first film, "What Becomes Of..." concentrates instead upon the father, and his search for redemption whilst haunted by a violent past. Both films in this series seem to dwell upon of the loss of their racial identity as "Maoris" and their subsequent relegation to that of an underclass in an impoverished society. It is an achievement that these films manage to examine these ideas without pulling their punches or romanticising the tribal origins of Maori culture. This comprises most of the original cast and has a very similar feel to that of the first film, although it leans towards the conventions of a thriller, with a sub-plot involving warring gangs. A worthy sequel to "Once Were Warriors" and one which shares its' preoccupation with violence and the examination of its roots. It would have been nice to see this get the wide cinema release it was refused compared to the overblown Hollywood dross we're used to.
Both films are based on original novels by Barry Duff , available from Vintage paperbacks.

sCrAwL!

sCrAwL! is a free, non-profit making zine dedicated to supporting the "do-it-your-self" ethic expressed by writers, artists and musicians outside of the corporate mainstream. It also seeks to serve as a platform for those who wish to challenge the very institutions who attempt to silence the many voices of dissent.
Feel free to contribute! Get in touch! Communicate!

1-5 donegall lane, belfast, n.ireland, u.k.
scrawlzine@hotmail.com

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